Having thus described our invention, what we claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is as follows:

1   1. A method for designing or deploying a communications network,
2   comprising the steps of:
3   providing a computerized model which represents a physical
4   environment in which a communications network is or will be installed,
5   said computerized model providing a display of at least a portion of said
6   physical environment;
7   identifying a plurality of system components which may be used in
8   said physical environment;
9   identifying at least one component kit composed of at least two
10   system components of said plurality of system components;
11   selecting either specific components from said plurality of system
12   components or said at least one component kit for use in said computerized
13   model; and
14   representing said selected specific components or said at least two
15   system components of said at least one component kit in said display as
16   part of a communications network.

1   2. The method of claim 1 wherein said second identifying step includes
2   the steps of
3   selecting said at least two system components from said plurality of
4   system components identified in said first identifying step; and
5   presenting said selected at least two system components as said at
6   least one component kit in said display.

1   3. The method of claim 2 wherein more than one component kit is

2   presented in said presenting step.

1   4. The method of claim 2 wherein more than two system components are

2   in said at least one component kit.

1   5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of generating a bill

2   of materials containing cost information for said selected specific

3   components or said at least two system components of said at least one

4   component kit utilized in said communications network.

1   6. The method of claim 1 wherein said display is three dimensional.

1   7. The method of claim 1 wherein said system components have

2   performance attributes associated with them, and further comprising the

3   step of running prediction models using the computerized model and said

4   performance attributes to predict performance characteristics of said

5   communications network.

1   8. The method of claim 7 further comprising the steps of measuring

2   performance data in said physical environment and presenting the

3   measured performance data in said display.

1   9. The method of claim 7 further comprising the steps of measuring

2   performance data in said physical environment and comparing results from

3   said prediction models to said measured performance data.

1   10. An apparatus for designing and deploying a communications network,

2   comprising:

3   a means for providing

4   (I) a computerized model which represents a physical environment

5   in which a communications network is or will be installed, said

6   computerized model providing a display of at least a portion of said

7   physical environment, and

8   (II) performance attributes for a plurality of system components

9   which may be used in said physical environment;

10   means for identifying a plurality of system components which may

11   be used in said physical environment;

12   means for identifying at least one component kit composed of at

13   least two system components of said plurality of system components;

14   means for selecting either specific components from said plurality

15   of system components or said at least one component kit for use in said

16   computerized model; and

17   means for representing said selected specific components or said at

18   least two system components of said at least one component kit in said

19   display as part of a communications network.

1   11. The apparatus of claim 10 further comprising a means for generating a

2   bill of materials containing cost information for said selected specific

3   components utilized in said communications network.

1   12. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein said display is three dimensional.

1   13. The apparatus of claim 10 further comprising

2   means for associating performance attributes with said system

3   components; and

4   means for running prediction models using the computerized model

5   and said performance attributes to predict performance characteristics of

6   said communications network.

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1   14. The apparatus of claim 13 further comprising a means for measuring

2   performance data and presenting the measured performance data in said

3   display.

1   15. The apparatus of claim 13 further comprising a means for comparing

2   measured performance data with results from said prediction models.